

HOPE NEW JERSEY



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Ken Bowers from Phillips Preiss Shapiro Associates served as a consultant on this project, providing fiscal and economic analysis to help RPA and Hope officials better understand the fiscal implications and critical trade-offs resulting from various development alternatives. RPA thanks Ken for his involvement and advice.

This report builds on RPA's efforts in the Highlands, and we thank the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, the Merck Foundation and the Lincoln Institute for Land Policy for their support of that program, especially RPA's advocacy of preserving key lands in the Highlands and transferring development rights to promote smart growth.

Last, we note that this effort began with the participation of Mayor Tim McDonough in the March 2001 N.J. Mayors' Institute on Community Design. Mayor McDonough participated in the first State Institute, and recognized the importance of this effort. Without his vision, dedication and perseverance, little would have been accomplished. RPA salutes Mayor McDonough and wishes him much success in this endeavor.

Over the past three years, a number of staff at RPA participated in the research and analysis that led to the conclusions drawn in this report. Principal contributors include:

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Executive Summary

Hope Township is poised at a crossroads. As urban sprawl continues to spread out along Route 80 from New York City towards the Delaware Water Gap, Hope is balanced between growth and preservation, between the highway and the landscape.

Hope boasts many things to be proud of: an unspoiled landscape of rolling hills, farmland and forest, excellent access to the interstate highway system, and a gorgeous historic Moravian Village settlement dating to the 19th century. However, despite these tremendous assets, Hope Township faces several challenges:

- **The Township has almost no commercial ratable activities, and the municipal budget is strained to provide services.** Farmland conservation and preservation is a high priority for the community, to preserve the historic and agricultural heritage. However, the cost of acquiring rights to all the land available for development is prohibitive. The Village Center contains many beautiful and historic homes, but it is also incomplete, with gaps in the village fabric. It needs to be reinforced with new, context-sensitive infill development, both commercial and residential.
- **Large parcels of land around the Route 80 interchange are vulnerable to development** that could be incompatible with the character and history of the community, and could draw vitality out of the downtown.

For Hope – and other communities across New Jersey – the critical question is how can a community reconcile new development with open space preservation?

This report offers three categories of recommendations to address these challenges.

- **To preserve the rural character of the community and its landscapes, Hope should move to protect its most critical agricultural lands.** The report provides an open space assessment that the Farmland Preservation Committee used to prioritize 3,263 acres of land in three areas. In addition to other farmland acquisition programs, a financing strategy explains how a Planning Initiative Grant will provide fiscal tools to acquire and protect this land.
- **To reinforce the Village Center and**

increase linkages to the interstate highway, Hope should plan for complementary growth in these areas. The report analyzes different strategies for the land around the Route 80 interchange, demonstrating how fiscal impacts can be balanced against aesthetic concerns. Different types of development around the interchange can support the town character and create new linkages if there are controls on building placement, set backs from critical view sheds, sensitive treatment of environmental resources, and limits on the amount of land which can be developed. In the Village Center, the report demonstrates the benefits of infill development, including a small hotel or inn.

- **To balance budgets in coming years, Hope should shift away from its over-reliance on the residential tax base, which approaches 90% if farms are included.** The proposed development alternatives are evaluated for fiscal impact, which illustrates how commercial development can be balanced with other types, such as attractive townhouses, which would also have positive impacts on the municipal budget.

Hope's goals of open space and development analyses can complement each other. These goals can be met by innovative planning and zoning techniques, including conservation subdivisions or clustered site planning, overlay zoning to deal with complex sites, and design guidelines.

Perhaps most importantly, **Hope should investigate the potential to use Transfers of Development Rights (TDRs) to balance growth and preservation.** Regional Plan Association's analysis tests two redevelopment scenarios for the village and interchange, including fiscal impacts. They demonstrate how Hope can generate significant funds to preserve its farmland by shifting residential development to the interchange parcels of land.

Chapter One: Open Space And Farmland Preservation

The Open Space Inventory in Hope Township's Master Plan is an excellent baseline of information.

However, it does not contain recommendations or strategies for integrating the information for use in planning or reviewing development or conservation proposals. To address this need, RPA undertook three tasks:

- Developing a mapped assessment of the Township's important open spaces and farmlands.
- Drafting a set of strategies for preserving open space and farmland.
- Assisting the Township's Farmland Preservation Committee in their efforts to pursue a Planning Incentive Grant.

Mapped Open Space and Farmland Assessment

The Open Space and Farmland Assessment was developed based on the inventory included in the Township's Master Plan, statewide preservation criteria such as that used by the farmland purchase of development rights program, and data being created through the USDA Forest Service Highlands Regional Study Update. The assessment was created using a Geographic Information System (GIS), which allowed the exploration of a variety of ranking criteria and a range of mapped products. (Hard copy maps and a cd containing the digital maps have been submitted to the Township. GIS files are available on request).

RPA worked with the Farmland Preservation Committee to determine what information to include in the GIS and to review the results of alternative natural resource assessments. After generating and discussing numerous preliminary maps showing natural resources in the Township, RPA, at the Committee's request, developed two composite maps showing resources of most important to the Committee. These are:

- **Hope Agricultural Composite Areas** (opposite page), illustrating high-value agricultural lands. This map is a composite of maps illustrating cultivated lands on prime and other soils, preserved farms, 1000 ft. buffers around preserved farms, and farms under farmland assessment.
- **Hope Water Resource Composite Areas** (next page) illustrating lands valuable for

protecting water resources, including riparian areas, C1 streams, trout maintenance waters, and headwater streams.

After developing these mapped assessments, RPA worked with the Township to develop strategies to preserve the lands identified as priorities, as described below.

Strategies for Preserving Open Space and Farmland

RPA outlined a number of steps Hope can take in retaining the Township's rural character and preserving farmland and other open spaces. These include acquisition of lands and easements for preservation, as well as planning and zoning strategies to support agriculture as an industry, protect natural resources, and guide development away from sensitive areas. What follows is a discussion of strategies RPA recommended that the Township consider as well as suggestions for ways RPA could help the Township accomplish its goals.

Identification and acquisition of lands and easements for preservation

Apply for a Planning Incentive Grant

The Planning Incentive Grant program is a state program that helps municipalities and counties buy development rights to protect farmland in large, reasonably contiguous lots. In this two-step program, a municipality applies for a special block grant in an area for a large area of reasonably contiguous farmland that they would like to see preserved. Once this project area application is accepted, processing individual parcels for preservation within the project area is relatively straightforward. Typically, grant applications are coordinated with the County, which contributes some of the funding for easement acquisition. To get funding from the county as well as the state, the township must apply through the County Agriculture Development Board.

Continue to pursue other Farmland Acquisition Programs

The Township should continue to encourage participation in traditional State and County farmland preservation programs, including the SADC Direct Easement Purchase, Fee Simple Purchase, County Easement Purchase, and 8-Year Preservation

Program. Some farm parcels may be more quickly and affordably preserved under these programs than as part of a Planning Incentive Grant project areas; Hope and RPA should consult with the SADC and CADB to determine the most strategic use of these various programs.

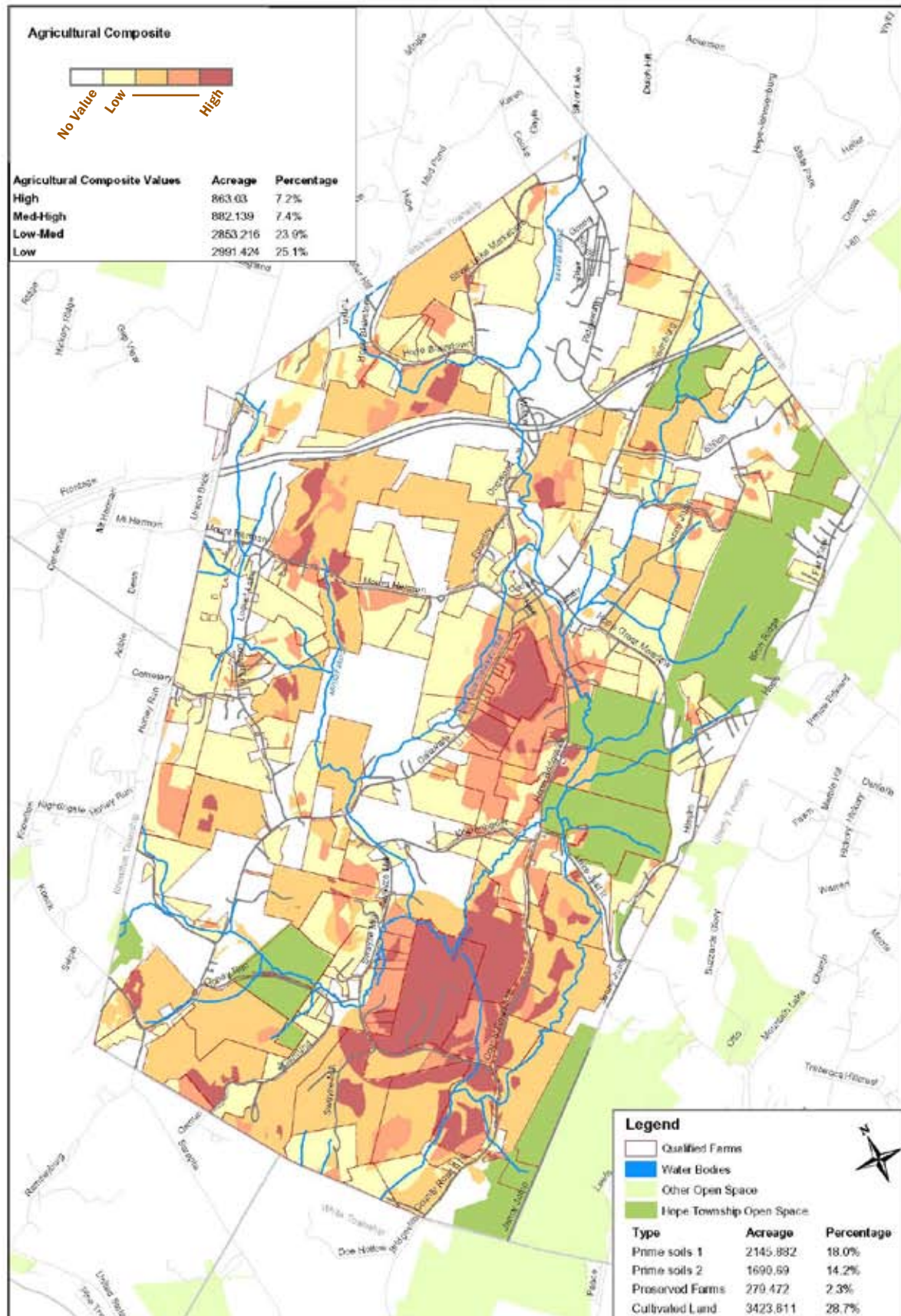
Support agriculture as an industry

Strategies for supporting agriculture as an industry should be included in a Farmland Preservation Plan. Some strategies recommended by the NJ SADC include:

- Survey Farms and agriculture-related businesses to better understand their needs and concerns.
- Review existing regulations to determine potential conflicts.
- Review existing and planned programs for agricultural impacts (e.g. economic development plans, housing, tax assessment).
- Use direct marketing: farm stands, pick-your-own, etc.
- Promote agri-tourism.
- Recognize agriculture as an important piece of local economy and promote through economic development plans, for example by permitting and supporting businesses that serve farmers (e.g. food processors).
- Adopt a Right to Farm ordinance. We understand Hope already has such an ordinance in place.

Encourage Use of Best Management Practices.

In order to protect soil and water resources, Hope should encourage the adoption of agricultural best management practices that improve water quality, conserve water and energy, prevent soil erosion, and reduce the use of nutrients and pesticides. Hope should investigate state and federal programs that offer technical and financial resources to landowners who want to prepare and implement plans to address natural resource concerns.



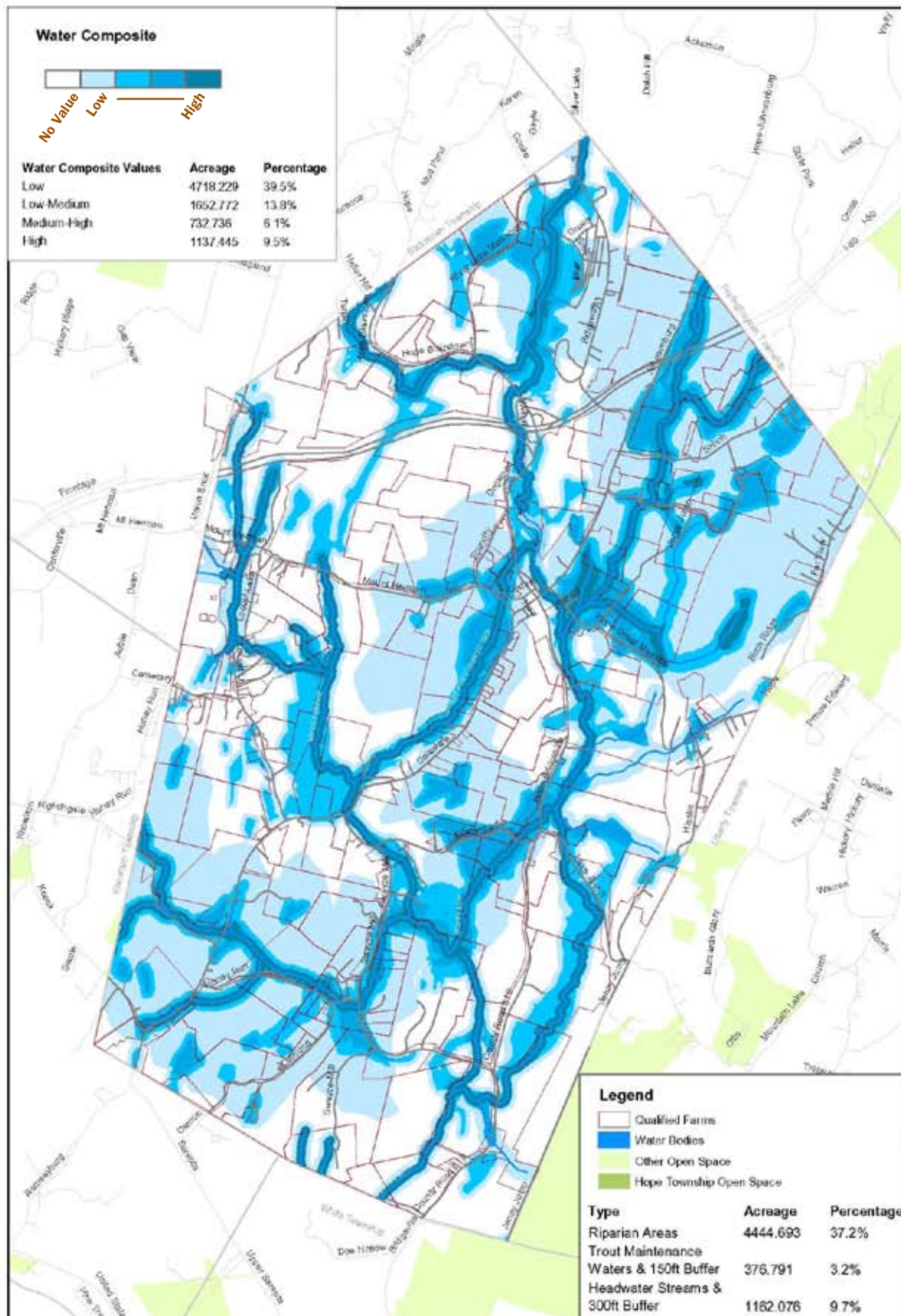
Hope Agricultural Composite Areas

The layers that comprise the Hope Agricultural Composite are Hope's cultivated lands on prime soils and other soils, preserved farms, 1000ft buffer of preserved farms, and farms in farmland assessment program.

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0 600 1,200 Meters

Map created 1/30/04



Hope Water Composite Areas

The layers that compile the Hope Water Composite are Hope's Trout Maintenance Waters with a 150ft buffer, Headwater Streams with a 300ft buffer, and Riparian Zones

Regional **Plan** Association

0 600 1,200 Meters

Map created 2/2/04

Other Preservation and Planning Techniques and Policies

Identify and prioritize open space and environmentally sensitive lands for protection.

The Township should identify high value open space and natural resources using the mapping and assessment work already completed and keeping the following principles in mind:

- **Prioritize lands with high natural resource values**, including land that protects water resources (such as streams and lakes), and habitat sensitive areas (such as wetlands, contiguous forests, and steep slopes).
- **Preserve large, contiguous areas of land and networks of open space.** Such a strategy best protects wildlife habitat, forested ecosystems, endangered species, and water resources. In addition, it will help maintain the Township's rural character, and will present opportunities for developing linear recreational resources.
- **Work with the State of NJ, Warren County and with neighboring municipalities** to preserve regional networks of open spaces that will form larger, regional open space systems.
- **Preserve lands with high scenic value.**
- **Coordinate open space and farmland preservation** to help support farming as an industry by acting as a buffer between agricultural and other land uses, thereby minimizing conflicts.

Identified lands should be protected through acquisition of lands and easements and through planning and zoning strategies, discussed below.

Identify funding sources to acquire open space and environmentally sensitive lands or their development rights

RPA can work with the Township to identify possible funding sources. One to consider may be the Green Acres Planning Incentive Program. Similar to the Farmland Preservation Planning Incentive Grant described above, this program requires the development and adoption of an Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP). While development of a final OSRP is beyond the scope of RPA's work, a significant portion of the work that needs to be done is contained in the mapping and assessment, and in identifying strategies

for acquisition and protection of high value open space and environmentally sensitive lands. Another possible source is the Forest Legacy Program managed by the USDA Forest Service. Forest Legacy is specifically designed to purchase easements on forested lands, with title resting with the farmer or separately purchased by a conservation entity.

Consider innovative planning and zoning techniques to preserve farmland, other open space, and environmentally sensitive lands.

While acquisition will be an important part of Hope's conservation strategy, other techniques can also help preserve the Township's rural character, agricultural lands and economy, and natural resources. What follows is a discussion of techniques that can be explored.

- **Cluster Zoning** Under cluster zoning developers would be encouraged to group houses in a section of a large parcel, with the remaining area set aside as open space. Where appropriate, farming could be allowed on the remainder.
- **Transfer of Development Rights** Transfer of developments rights (TDR) programs are designed to shift growth away from agricultural, environmentally sensitive or open space regions of a municipality to more appropriate areas. Landowners in areas where land use is restricted are allowed to sell the development rights to their land. Those who purchase these development rights may use them to build in a designated growth area at a higher density than is normally allowed in a town's zoning ordinance. Municipalities can also establish a limited TDR program, in which a clustering is allowed between non-contiguous parcels. Estimates of the fiscal benefits of TDR to new residential developments at the interchange are given in Chapter 3.
- **Agricultural Protection Zoning** Agricultural protection zoning establishes large minimum lot sizes, limits non-farm uses, and/or requires houses to be built on small lots and restricts subdivision of land into parcels that are too small to farm. This could be combined with a form of TDR to allow landowners in an agricultural zone to sell development rights to those in an area more appropriate for development.
- **Lot averaging** Lot averaging requires that a majority of lots are smaller than required minimum lot size, permitting other larger lots designed to meet specific conservation objectives.
- **Better site design** Review subdivision regulations and update to require new development to

incorporate best management practices for stormwater protection, to limit removal of vegetated riparian buffers, forestland, and critical habitat, to limit development on steep slopes, to encourage conservation of scenic corridors, and to require best management practices during construction.

- **Agricultural buffers** Zoning could require buffers to minimize conflicts between agricultural uses and residential developments.
- **Stream Corridor and Wetlands Protection Ordinance**
- **Steep Slope Ordinance**
- **Overlay zones** Overlay zones, which provide an additional layer of development standards over existing zoning districts, could be adopted to protect sensitive features.
- **Open space management and monitoring strategies should be developed** In addition to acquisition of lands and easements for open space and farmland preservation, Hope should develop strategies to manage and monitor these protected lands.

The Highlands Water Protection and Planning Act, passed last year, may also provide new tools and resources for the Town to employ. Under the terms of the Act, Hope is included in the Highlands Planning Area, which means that any proposal by the Highlands Regional Council for areas within Hope would be voluntary in nature. The Council is expected to develop a draft and final regional plan in 2006.

Planning Incentive Grant

After discussing with the Farmland Preservation Committee the recommendations for preserving open space and farmland, the Committee decided to pursue a Planning Incentive Grant. RPA has assisted the Committee in pursuing this grant by outlining the requirements of the Farmland Preservation Planning Incentive Grant (PIG) program, describing actions the Township must take to fulfill them, and supplying information for use by the township as it pursues a PIG.

To be eligible for a PIG, Hope Township must fulfill the following requirements:

- Identify project areas of multiple farms that are reasonably contiguous and located in an

agricultural development area.

- Establish an Agricultural Advisory Committee.
- Establish an open space tax or other dedicated source of funding.
- Prepare a Farmland Preservation Plan.

Each of these requirements, along with information required to fulfill them, are discussed further below.

Identify project areas of multiple farms that are reasonably contiguous and located in an agricultural development area.

In order to guide the Township’s farmland preservation strategy, RPA assessed the value of Hope’s lands for agriculture. The results of this assessment are illustrated in the Hope Agricultural Composite Areas map, which describes lands of value for agriculture. This map is a composite of maps illustrating cultivated lands on prime and other soils, preserved farms, 1000 ft buffers around preserved farms, and farms under farmland assessment. Most of Hope township is located in an agricultural development area.

Using this assessment, the Township’s Farmland Preservation Committee identified and prioritized exemplary areas to target for acquisition of development rights under a Planning Incentive Grant. Once the Township forms an Agricultural Advisory Committee (see #2, below) it should review these proposed Project Areas and refine them as necessary.

The three areas are described below and depicted on the attached map; an inventory of qualified farm properties within these areas is was conducted for this study. The PIG application will require that this inventory show the characteristics of each farm in the project area. RPA has begun this process, doing a GIS assessment of soils types for each farm parcel within the project areas; the Agricultural Advisory Committee should complete this inventory by doing a drive-through assessment of farm properties and by examining the qualified farm applications for each parcel. The Agricultural Advisory Committee should also determine which farms have already been preserved within each Planning Area, and how many additional acres are targeted for preservation.

Planning Area 1

This planning area is located in the southern portion of the township west of Jenny Jump Forest on either side of Route 519. It totals 2,311 acres, with 1,875 acres (81%) under farmland assessment.

Planning Area 2

This planning area is located in the northwestern portion of the township on both sides of Mt. Hermon Road south of Route I-80. It totals 783 acres, with 565 acres (98%) under farmland assessment.

Planning Area 3

This planning area is located in the northeastern portion of the township just south of route 80. It totals 838 acres, with 823 acres (98%) under farmland assessment.

The PIG application will require a multi-year plan for purchasing these farms in these project areas. The township will need to estimate, in consultation

Planning Area	Total Acres Ag. Assessed	Avg. Cost/ Acre	Total Cost
1	1,875	4,000	7,500,000
2	565	4,000	2,260,000
3	823	4,000	3,292,000
Total	3,263	4,000	13,052,000

with the county development board or through an appraisal for the project areas, the total cost of purchasing development easements on all of the farms in the project area, as well as the Town’s share of this cost.

To give a general idea of how much it might cost to preserve farmland in the three project areas, RPA has developed a rough estimate for each proposed project area, based on an average of \$4,000 per acre for a preservation easement. This estimate is based on a conversation with Bob Resker, Warren County’s Agriculture Development Board Chair, who is familiar with how much other towns in the county have paid for easements; for the PIG application the Township will need to more accurately determine the cost after consulting with the CADC. (Please note that this estimate does not take into account the fact that there are several farms already preserved nor does it account for the likelihood that land values will rise substantially over the next ten years).

Under the PIG program, the state will pay a percentage of the cost of each easement.¹ Under the

sliding scale formula, the state will pay 68% of a \$4,000 easement. If Hope Township applies for a PIG grant through the county, Warren County will pay half of the remaining easement costs (if Hope Township applies directly to the SADC it would be responsible for the full 32%). This works out to a little under \$9 million from the state, and approximately \$2.08 million each from Warren County and from Hope. If the Township were to spread these costs equally over ten years, Hope would be responsible for about \$210,000 a year for ten years. (Ten years is used as an example; the PIG program requires a multi-year plan, but Hope will need to determine how many years it will take to preserve the farmland based on its funding ability and the interest of farmers.)

In determining the final project areas, the Township must consider how much it expects to be able to spend through an open space tax or other source of funding, and then prioritize or redraw the project areas based on this projection. Hope should also begin working with Warren County to ensure that county funding will be available.

Establish an Agricultural Advisory Committee

As written in the legislation establishing the PIG program, the Agricultural Advisory Committee is the body that guides the development of the Farmland Preservation Plan, described further below. This committee must be made up of three to five residents, the majority of whom must be farmers who own at least part of their land. Members must be appointed by the mayor and approved by the municipal governing body. The Committee reports to the Town planning board.

Establish an open space tax or other dedicated source of funding

Hope Township must establish a dedicated source of funding for farmland preservation. Hope recently passed, in a non-binding resolution, a tax for farmland preservation; a similar binding resolution is expected to be (and to pass) on the next ballot. Once established, the farmland preservation tax will fulfill the need for a dedicated source of funding. However, this tax is not the only way of funding farmland preserva-

(\$3000-5000); 50% of the next \$4000 (\$5000-9000); the percentage covered by the SADC continues to diminish as the easements get more expensive. The funding share is based on the certified market value – determined by multiple appraisals approved by the SADC.

¹ The SADC will pay 80% of the first \$1000 of easement value; 70% of the next \$2000 (\$1000-3000); 60% of the next \$2000

tion; other dedicated sources of funding could include repeated annual appropriations or bonds.

Prepare a Farmland Preservation Plan

The Farmland Preservation Plan is meant to guide the Town's agricultural preservation strategies, and must be adopted as an element in the Township's Master Plan. The Farmland Preservation Plan must include a number of components, outlined below. RPA has begun to compile and analyze required information for use by the Agricultural Advisory Committee as it undertakes the development of the final Farmland Preservation Plan. Required components under the legislation establishing the Farmland Preservation Planning Incentive Grant program are as follows:

- An inventory of farm properties in the entire municipality and a map illustrating significant areas of agricultural land. The Hope Agricultural Composite Areas map illustrates significant areas of agricultural land, and shows farm properties throughout the municipality. An inventory of those properties within the planning areas are attached; the Township will need to compile a list of farm properties throughout the municipality as well. (Note that map showing farm parcels was digitized by RPA using a 1996 Master Plan supplied by the Township; some changes have occurred since then. The list of farm properties in the planning areas was supplied by the Township from the 2003 tax assessment.)
- A detailed statement showing that municipal plans and ordinances support and promote agriculture as a business. As part of the Master Plan update being undertaken this year, Hope Township should examine municipal plans and ordinances to determine the extent to which they promote agriculture. This statement should include a discussion of the town's Right to Farm ordinance.
- A plan for preserving as much farmland as possible in the short term by leveraging monies made available by the Garden State Preservation Trust Act, through a variety of mechanisms including, but not limited to, utilizing: option agreements, installment purchases; and encouraging donations for permanent development easements. The township will need to estimate, in consultation with the county development board or through an appraisal for the project areas, the total cost of purchasing development easements on all of the farms in the project area, as well as the Town's share of this cost. Preliminary contacts with farm owners will enable the Township to gauge potential interest in the program.

- A statement of farming trends, characterizing the types of agricultural production in the municipality. A review of data on agricultural production in 1992 and 2002, from information obtained by the New Jersey Agricultural Statistics Board which compiles information on farms that qualify for farmland tax assessment status, shows that agricultural production declined in Hope Township by 4.9% from 7,502 to 7,137 acres; for comparison, acres under agricultural assessment declined by 1.1% for Warren County as whole. A more specific breakdown of agricultural production by crop type is included as Attachment 3. The Agricultural Advisory Committee should review this data, and might consider undertaking a farm survey as well, to better understand agricultural production in the municipality.
- A discussion of plans to develop the agricultural industry in the municipality. Strategies for supporting agriculture as an industry should be included in a Farmland Preservation Plan. Recommended strategies are discussed above, under Strategies for Preserving Open Space and Farmland.

Chapter Two: Land Use & Development Study

The implications of future development in Hope are explored from two perspectives: impacts on the appearance and character of the interchange area and the village center; and the net fiscal impacts of different development scenarios.

The underlying principles are clear; that development should not destroy the beautiful natural setting which is so much a part of the quality of life for the residents of Hope. At the same time, new development, properly designed, could support and reinforce the character of the Hope community and provide valuable revenues which could be used to support community services and purchase open space.

It is easy enough to state the principles. It is somewhat more challenging to understand what the actual physical and fiscal impacts would be. To do that, a variety of development scenarios representing different mixes and intensities of land-use are modeled here, both as three dimensional models and as economic development projects. The scenarios were generated by examining the various proposals that have been made for the interchange area over the last ten years or so. Some of these past proposals were short lived, others were more serious involving extended discussions with the Township, technical research and commitment of time and resources by the prospective developer. These proposals indicate at least some private market interest in a range of uses and so provides the basis for a kind of real estate market study.

Interviews were conducted with developers or representatives of the various industries or development types generated by this list. In some cases, interviews were conducted with the developers who made the proposals to understand what influenced their decision to propose something in Hope or to go to another location. These people could speak directly to the particular issues and opportunities of the Hope interchange for a particular development type.

In other cases, people who did not know very much about Hope Township, but were developers or experts in the same kinds of developments were interviewed. These people could talk more generally about the characteristics of the different development types – the site requirements,

market characteristics, etc. Finally, the owner/operators of comparable developments were interviewed for similar kinds of information. In this way a profile was created for typical developments of different kinds. The profile includes the basic physical characteristics in terms of size of site and structure and the advantages and disadvantages of the Hope location.

The evaluation of different development scenarios should focus on three key questions relating to suitability for Hope and community preservation:

- Does the use support township community character, both in terms of design and activities?
- Does the use help connect township resources?
- What design guidelines should control future development?

The Planning Framework for the Interchange

In keeping with the current master plan revisions, this design and financial impact study focuses on the same four quadrants of the interchange and the same

properties within those quadrants as have been mapped “POP - Planned Office Park” on the proposed land use map. (For the purposes of the rest of the report these will be identified by their cardinal compass orientations around the Route 80/ County Road 521 intersection: southeast, southwest, northwest, northeast.)

Environmental Constraints:

As part of the Open Space and Farmland Preservation Study described in Chapter 1, RPA compiled, mapped, and assessed 35 environmental factors that describe the Township’s agricultural, biodiversity, forest, recreational, and water resources. Using the mapped assessments of agricultural lands, the Farmland Preservation Committee worked with RPA to target agricultural lands for preservation. The Committee is now pursuing funding for preservation and working to incorporate the study’s findings into the revised Master Plan.

In the Land Use and Development study, RPA sought to respond to the environmental constraints of the interchange site and to the Farmland Preservation Committee’s preservation plans. The map (left) illustrates these constraints.

Environmental and planning factors illustrated on the map include preserved farms, areas targeted for preservation (Preservation Areas (Planning Incentive Grant)), streams and 150 foot stream buffers, NH Priority Sites, and other important habitat areas.

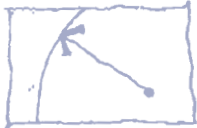
There are two types of habitat areas described in this map: those that indicate “large range” species – that is, species that travel over large distances to feed, mate, nest and otherwise live through the year – and those where a particularly limited and clearly devised area is used as habitat. “Large range” habitat types include suitable, priority species, state threatened, state endangered, and Federal Threatened and Endangered species, and are illustrated in varying shades of green; while these areas should be considered in planning for the area, they do not absolutely constrain development. National Heritage Priority sites, which describe areas where protected species have been seen, more tightly limit development. A National Heritage Priority site can be found in the southeast quadrant of the interchange. This cannot be disturbed by future development. In the yield calculations for this quadrant, this area is not included.

While a more detailed assessment would ultimately be required, the implication for



Environmental constraints

Legend



Significant View



Steep Slope



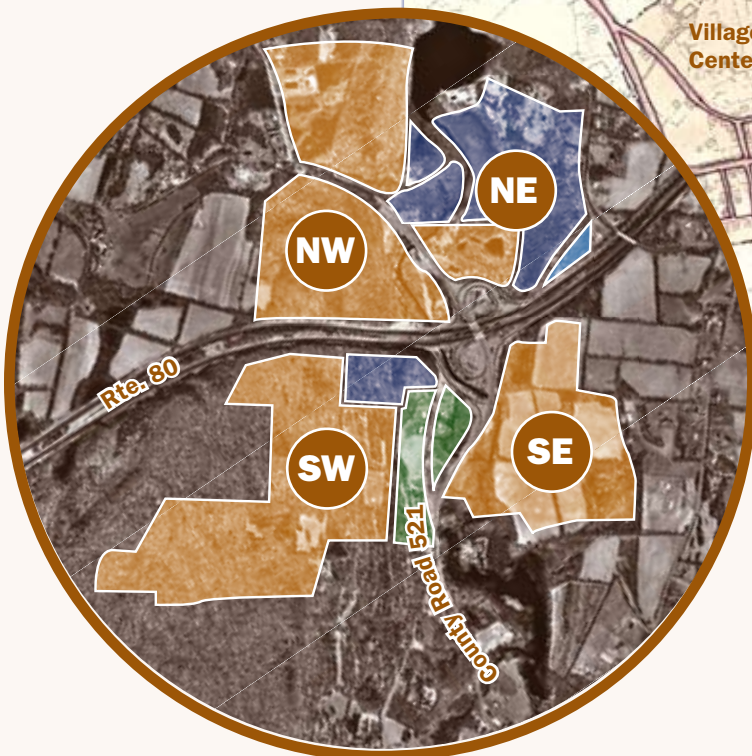
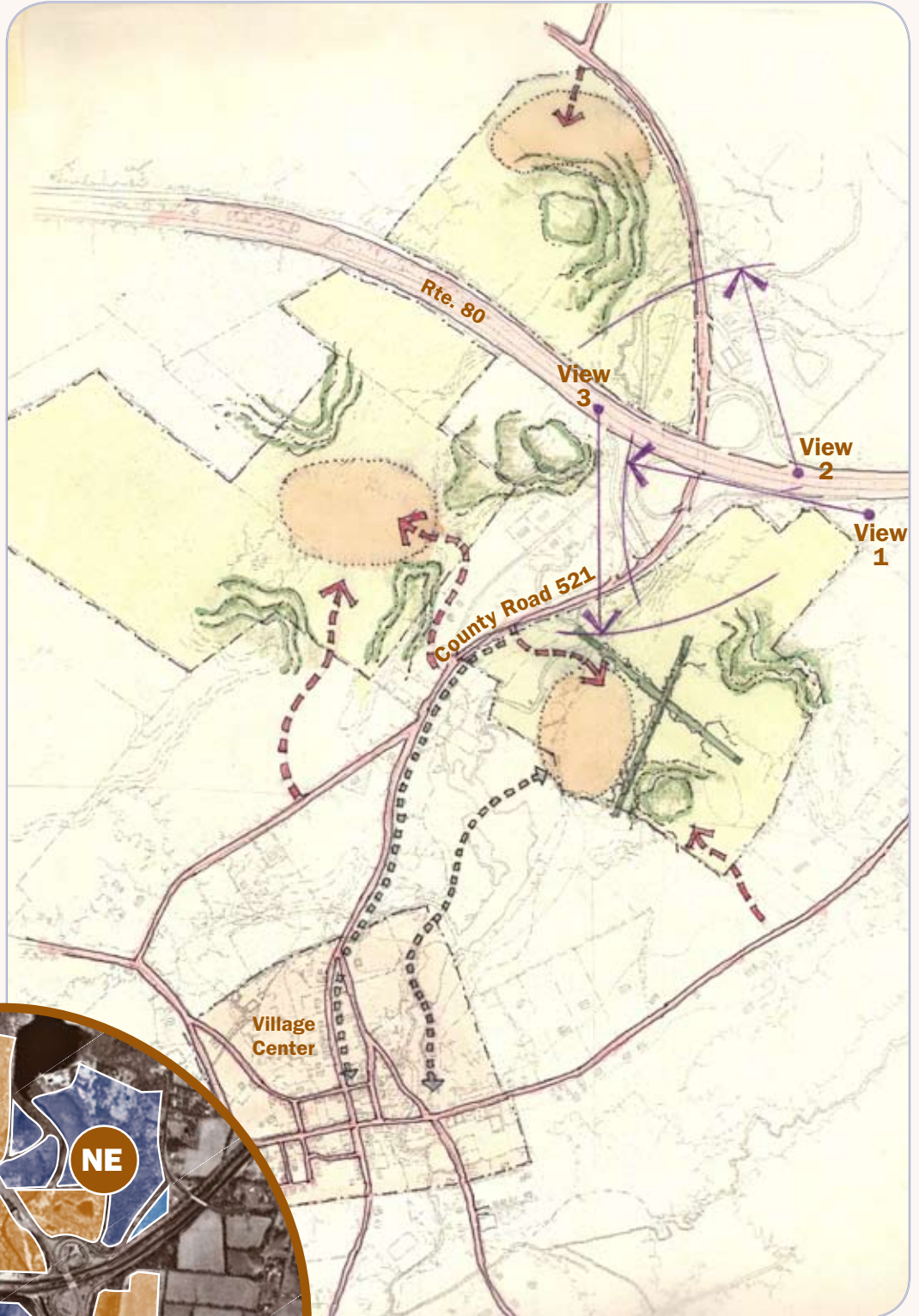
Pref. Development Area



Site Access



Greenway



this study is that these areas could be developed in the context of a conservation plan that determined what role these parcels play in the larger habitat. The fact that Route 80 creates a significant barrier to species movement means that new development in the two southern quadrants will be at the northern edge of a much larger habitat and will probably have less impact than development elsewhere where new development could make a habitat area discontinuous.

The northeast quadrant (bounded by Hope-Marksboro Road, County Route 521 and Little Silver Lake), is federally categorized as supporting Threatened and Endangered Species therefore is not considered for development in this study. This is a challengeable assumption pursuant to a more detailed analysis of the endangered species and the role of this piece of land in its habitat. (In the discussion below, there is speculation about the possibility of transferring density off of this land.)

Views (see map on previous page)

The interchange will always be the “front door” to Hope Township and preservation of the natural landscape here is essential. While there are many perspectives from which the development parcels will be seen, the planning framework identifies three critical views that impact future development:

View 1 From Route 80 west-bound toward the southwest quadrant. Before dipping down toward the interchange with County Route 521 (CR 521), Route 80 affords expansive views of the “little mountain” – the promontory at the northeastern edge of this quadrant. To minimize the visual impact of any new development, nothing should be built on the high topography at this corner. Further, any development in the southwest quadrant should be far enough west so that the existing stands of trees block the visibility of any new buildings in the level areas.

View 2 From Route 80 west-bound toward the northwest quadrant. As one approaches the off ramps to CR 521 passing the forested areas along the north side of the road, the views open up toward the northwest. As with the southwest, there is steep heavily wooded topography rising out of the low lying areas, although there is no distinguishing landscape feature comparable to the promontory

in the southwest quadrant. To minimize the visual impact, any future development should be primarily on the northern areas of the parcel, essentially “around the corner” from this view-shed and should avoid the highest elevation portions.

View 3 From Route 80 eastbound toward the southeast quadrant. This is perhaps the most important view of all, as it affords excellent views of the parcel with the most significant development potential. As one approaches the interchange, there are expansive views from the higher elevations on Route 80.

Access and Connectivity

As discussed below, the different development programs more or less lend themselves to different levels of connection to the Village Center. Regardless of the development program, each of the quadrants differs in its potential connectivity to the Village Center.

The northwest development areas will necessarily have a weaker relationship to the Village Center. Development programs that are less synergistic with the Village Center can be located here without much sacrifice – industrial or office uses for example. On the other hand, any new residential development will feel isolated from the life of the Village Center and this may be a lost opportunity to support community character. Because of the topography on the east edge of this quadrant, access from the north is more likely. In the design studies presented here, the assumption is that a new access road that aligns with the Hope-Marksboro Road can provide primary access and create a simple intersection organized around a new four-way intersection.

The southeast quadrant offers the greatest potential to link any new development to the Village Center. Because this area is the least challenged in terms of topography, it is also the most accessible from several directions. Although primary access will always be from County Road 521 (and in the case of more intensive commercial uses perhaps exclusively) there are possibilities for other linkages to the Village including some combination of greenways along the wetlands, a small road or some connection to the Hope-Johnsonburg. There is however, one very significant obstacle to access – the wetlands and the Beaver Brook must be crossed. While this is technically not a huge challenge, it is expensive and requires state agency approval. (In fact, this was a significant factor in a formerly abandoned proposal.)

There is one other compelling feature of the

southeast development area that informs the design studies presented here – the stands of mature trees divide the developable area into four quadrants. This underlying organization of the area is very strong and is worth responding to; it is sympathetic with the topography; the trees provide screening, even in the winter months, from the east-bound highway approach; and, as the design studies illustrate, the division help suggest a way to break up the scale of any new development.

Between the relative inaccessibility of the northern quadrants and the potential connectivity of the southeast quadrant is the southwest development, at 133 acres, the largest. As with the southeast quadrant, there are a few options for access depending on the intensity and kind of use. The least intensive connection is, again, from County Road 521 although a new road here would have to negotiate the steep topography on the east face of the development area and would probably be visible from the west-bound highway approach. The landscape design of this road will be very important. Another access possibility is from Foundry Road. This has the advantage of being relatively level and completely screened from view. Depending on the development program, such a connection may be desirable or not. Commercial uses are less sympathetic to this connection because they will bring commercial traffic farther into the Village. However, if there is residential development on this quadrant, a connection to Foundry Road could help link new development to the Village Center. Overall, because new development is likely to be on the flat interior of the site, it will feel somewhat isolated, even if new greenway connections are built to it.

Preferred Development Areas

These several factors – topography, access, view impacts – together suggest for each quadrant a preferred area that would be the “center of gravity” for new development – the area where most of the development should be directed.

Northwest: Most of the development should be on the north side where the ground is more level and where new construction will be out of the view shed of the highway. Construction should not be allowed on the high topography at the center of the development zone. Primary access should be proximate to the Hope Marksboro Road intersection.

Green Infrastructure for development



Southwest: Most of the development should be on the level topography in the central, eastern portion of the development zone. The development should be primarily in the eastern portion of the zone but far enough west (approximately 200 feet) to be screened from the view shed of the highway.

Southeast: Most of the development should be in the lower elevations at the western side of the site where it will be largely screened from view, especially from the viewshed of east-bound Route 80. This also affords the best access to County Route 521. As described above, development here can be organized around the stands of mature trees dividing the fields.

Common Issues

- One of the incidental opportunities that can result from allowing some development on a portion of each of the redevelopment areas, is that this can make the rest of the area accessible by trails and walking paths. At the moment, it is impossible to get to many of these beautiful wooded areas. If access and easement agreements are negotiated as part of the development agreement, it would be possible to drive to a parking area and then walk along some trails in the woods, something that is not possible at the moment.
- Any development in the southeast quadrant should facilitate pedestrian connections through the site between the wetland areas and the Village Center.
- All of the development types should aggressively use the most creative best management practices for storm water and landscaping strategies.
- Employ best management practices for storm water.
- Use innovative strategies to “scrub” non-point-source pollution that runs off of paved surfaces.
- Restore riparian and forested corridors to create new on-site amenities and greenway connections to the larger context
- Link landscape strategies on individual properties to a comprehensive landscape design strategy for the larger area.

Characteristics of Potential Development Types

In the following section each of several likely development types are evaluated in terms of two principal criteria: Impacts on Community Character and Connectivity.

Professional Offices

This location does not support large or even intermediate scale office buildings. And from a design perspective, even mid-rise office buildings (4 to 6 stories) would be an intrusion on the landscape. However, low rise professional office buildings, similar to those pictured here, are possible.



Impacts on Community Character

Office development of this kind is probably a neutral influence. As shown here, from an architectural point of view, the buildings can have a “village aesthetic” which is innocuous. From an activity point of view, the office uses are not particularly synergistic with the Township. Presumably some number of workers would patronize the businesses downtown, but this is probably marginal.

Connectivity

It is unlikely that visitors to a professional office campus will link that trip to another destination in Hope Township, and so this kind of development will have limited ability to link community resources. Nevertheless, if this kind of development is built on the southeast area, pedestrian connections to the village should be required.

Inns or Small Hotels

Hope Township is a suitable location for a small “bed and breakfast” scale inn or a small family owned hotel because of the proximity to all of the Delaware Valley and Appalachian Trail recreational resources with which the Village’s historic character and antiques businesses are so compatible.



Impacts on Community Character

Properly designed, this kind of use can be very supportive of the township. These are relatively small developments with small structures that can have architectural character compatible with the Township architecture. Visitors are likely to patronize other township businesses and natural areas. There are essentially no traffic impacts. In fact, a small “bed & breakfast scale inn” could be an excellent infill development right in the Village Center.

Connectivity

Because these uses are so synergistic with the life of the village center, this kind of small inn would favor the southeast or southwest redevelopment areas where pedestrian connections, and, perhaps even a small secondary road connection to the Hope Johnsonburg Road or along the edge of the Millbrook riparian area to the Village Center could be made. Also, because these kinds of accommodations will be capitalizing on the beautiful natural setting, a trail network accessible to the general public should be part of the site planning.

Chain Hotel

The area of the highway interchange has the obvious advantage of auto accessibility that these uses require. However, because it is a chain hotel, it is potentially out of scale and character with the rest of the village. There are important site planning considerations, especially with regards to visibility from the highway. The standard development model would want to be highly visible from the highway and have signage that was visible from a significant distance. A condi-



tion of development for this use at the Hope interchange would have to disallow that kind of visibility and signage. While the industry representatives interviewed felt that this was a distinct disadvantage, it was not necessarily a “deal breaker”. The other consideration cited in interviews is that this location may suffer because it is so close to the final destination – the Water Gap area - but not quite there, and so travelers may simply opt to go the fifteen minutes farther to be in the center of the recreational area.

Impacts on Community Character

An industry standard chain hotel is probably out of character with the Township. However, the redevelopment sites are large enough and well-enough screened so that a low-rise structure (3 stories) could probably be designed with minimum impact. As with the smaller format inns and hotels, it may support the village center in that visitors to the hotel may then visit the businesses there. That depends on whether this is used only as a one-night stay for people passing through or whether it is used as a “home base” for multiple nights as visitors visit the various attractions in the area, the Hope Village Center and Land of Make Believe among them.

Connectivity

Pedestrian connections from the southeast redevelopment area to the village center should be promoted. Car access other than from County Road 521 is probably not advantageous. If there is a full service restaurant, ballroom and some conferencing ability (as with Best Western at Hunt’s Landing), there may be some traffic associated with the end of the events there.

Outlet Mall

An “outlet mall” is a destination retail center drawing from a trade area of up to a 100 miles in radius or more, which is tenanted primarily by shops carrying merchandise associated

with a particular brand, designer, or manufacturer, although increasingly also featuring off-price merchandise from department stores and category stores. Outlet centers are typically large, at least in excess of 200,000 square feet, and do not have anchor tenants. While their roots are as off-price, value-oriented centers, a new trend has been to emphasize high-end merchandise at lower-than-usual prices.

The outlet mall offers the tantalizing possibility, if designed properly, of creating a significant amount of net ratable commercial development in a format that is in keeping with both the scale and character of the Township. The typical shopping center or mall has two or more very large anchor stores. The outlet center, on the other hand, tends to have many fairly small stores of roughly comparable size (averaging



2500 to 4500 sf. each) and is typically designed as a pedestrian environment, trying to emulate the experience of a traditional village center. The danger is that if it is not designed properly, the outlet center can look like a phony bit of misplaced nostalgia. The good news is that if designed properly, it can be sympathetic in character to the township and allow for numerous connections there.

There are two other challenges. These require every bit as much parking as other retail formats. In order to protect the setting in Hope, parking areas need to be subdivided, heavily landscaped and screened and provide for pedestrians. Secondly, in order for the outlet center to be synergistic with the Village Center, the outlet center must not be so complete in and of itself, that it replaces the Village Center experience. In particular, this means prohibiting food service in the outlet center, except for the most incidental refreshments. This is not without precedent. In another municipality on Long Island an agreement was made where the outlet mall developer not only kept out competing businesses, but actively promoted town center businesses at the mall.

Finally, industry trends are towards larger format developments. The 200,000 sf. development modeled here is now at the very small end of the

scale, with 350,000 to 500,000 square foot projects much more common. These could exceed the scale acceptable here.

Impacts on Community Character

While a typical shopping mall might do little more than cannibalize the business in the town center, an outlet mall, if properly designed, could support community character if the mix of uses was synergistic with the existing businesses in town; and if the proximity to the Village Center is promoted. The ideal scenario is one in which someone drives to the outlet center as a regional destination, and then walks, takes a shuttle bus (or drives) to Hope to eat and go antiquing; or if the visit is part of a day-long experience that includes going to the Land of Make Believe.

Connectivity

A properly designed outlet mall in this location, particularly in the southeast redevelopment area, should have excellent pedestrian connections to the Village. Because there is significant auto traffic, vehicular access should be from County Road 521 only. However, an access road for a small shuttle or “rubber wheeled trolley” could extend from the southeast redevelopment area through the landscape along the river to the Village Center.

Industrial Uses

Several kinds of industrial developments could locate at the interchange. First, there is traditional “low tech” manufacturing. This would likely be one or two “big box” structures (40,000 sf) – largely windowless and unarticulated. (A cardboard box manufacturer approached the Township with this kind of development some years ago. The manufacturers located in another municipality because of tax rates.) Much of this space is devoted to warehousing and storage so employment numbers tend to be low. Little parking is needed although truck loading and off-loading must be provided. This



kind of development does not offer much to the Township. There is little synergy with other activities and so little need to connect this kind of development to the rest of the Township. Because the buildings will be uninteresting at best, they should be heavily screened from view.

More attractive would be “high tech” flex type of industrial buildings. These tend to be smaller buildings (30,000 sf) that can be easily subdivided for multiple users. Flex manufacturers tend to be “cleaner”, making higher value added products. These buildings are usually organized as a “campus” - an ensemble of buildings in a well manicured landscape, reflecting the higher curb appeal of an office park environment as opposed to the traditional “industrial park”. The buildings are often organized in pairs framing, in alternating fashion, a “front door” entry courtyard to the front office functions and a “back door” service courtyard for loading small trucks (large tractor trailers are usually not needed).

Impacts on Community Character

Unlike the professional office buildings which can be “domesticated” - made to look almost residential by using pitched roofs and divided windows - industrial building types will always

look like large commercial structures. Even high-end flex manufacturing buildings, attractive as they are, are completely different from the rural village character of Hope. Fortunately, each of the three favored development sites is large enough so that the buildings can be largely screened from view, or afforded partial views only of the more attractive front office portions of the buildings

Connectivity

As with the office park development described above, this kind of development is probably a neutral influence on community character. While the buildings can be expensive and attractive, they are of a completely different character than the rest of the Township and so should probably be largely screened from view. (This is different from the office park development which, as described above, can be “domesticated” in appearance with pitched roofs and double-hung windows.)

Residential Development

Residential intensification in Hope is clearly a difficult and contentious challenge. On the one hand, age restricted housing can be a significant net ratable development for the Township. The problem is that senior housing projects tend to “inward looking”, creating a single-profile, single-interest

community set apart from the more naturally diverse population pattern in town. In addition, some municipalities have had political challenges of importing a single population that is otherwise not connected to the long-term interests of the community, distorting municipal spending priorities particularly in regards to passing school budgets.

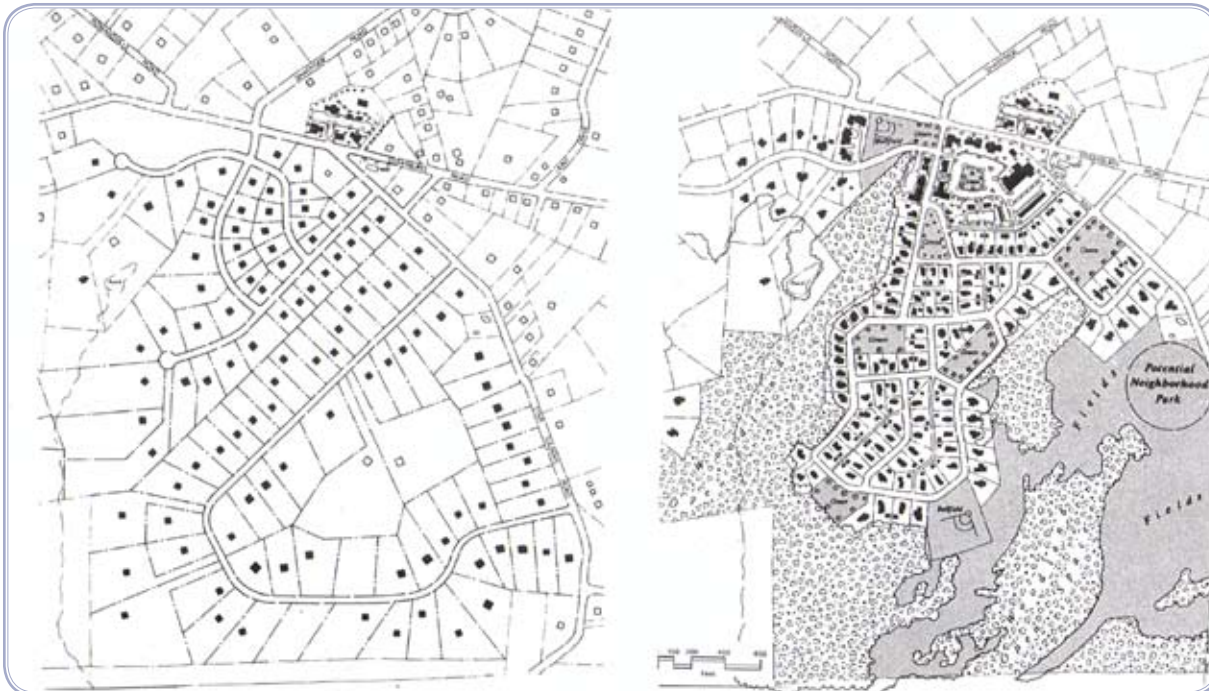
It is difficult to know what level of intensity is appropriate. In the larger study area between the interchange and the Village Center, at least three patterns are evident: properties of 3 or more acres; properties of approximately 1 acre and; within the Village Center, houses on small lots, approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ acre. For this exercise, the overall yield for each of the three redevelopment areas was derived from a standard of 1 du/acre, striking a balance between the larger lot properties and the compact village center properties. The design studies then assumed that conservation subdivision principles were used in the site planning, creating more compact “clustered” neighborhoods, approximating the overall density of $\frac{1}{4}$ du/acre found within the Village Center.

Conservation subdivision strategies are illustrated in the diagram to the left: It starts by mapping the underlying natural resources of

the site – contiguous stand of mature forests; steep slopes; riparian areas; special geological features. The disposition of buildings on the site responds to, and protects these resources. The result is a more compact development that preserves natural resources.

One of the challenges here, is that the appeal of living in Hope Township is its rural character. It is not clear how much density the market will support – that is, at what point a new neighborhood becomes too suburban and disconnected from the landscape that is so much a part of the Hope experience.

Conservation Subdivision Strategies





Rte. 80

County Road 524

Village Center



A related issue is that the new neighborhood must not become its own mixed-use village that, competes with the existing village center (similar to the outlet center discussion above). In other words, the new neighborhood should not offer the very kinds of amenities – in particular the “main street” experience – which the home buyers in higher density neighborhoods are probably looking for. The village center must remain the “main street” for this new neighborhood. Does that make the higher density unmarketable?

Impacts on Community Character

Conventional housing, if it is designed to avoid the problems described above and if it does not create an exclusive enclave, can be very supportive of the Hope community by supporting local businesses and pumping life into the village center. However, this is a net fiscal loser for the Township as the demand for services, particularly schools, will outstrip the revenue from new real estate taxes.

Connectivity

New residential development should create a new neighborhood that to the greatest extent possible feels as if it is a seamless extension of the village. Clearly this favors the sites south of Route 80 and the southeastern area in particular. Pedestrian connections to the new neighborhood should be well established. Secondary access is worth studying for the south areas from Foundry Road and the Hope Johnsonburg Road. To the extent that a new residential area includes amenities such as a club house, or health club, these should not be buried in the center of the new neighborhood, but located at the edge closest to the Village Center. The Township should negotiate aggressively with the developer to allow some shared access to these amenities, perhaps contributing to their support at some level.

Infill in the Village Center

There are several places in the Village Center where new, context-sensitive buildings could reinforce the historic fabric of the village. These would be buildings constructed under a comprehensive, rigorous set of design guidelines to insure that new architecture is compatible with the existing buildings. Along the Hope Blairstown Road and Delaware Road and these buildings could have ground floor office or retail uses with residences above. There are several sites for single family houses and others that would support townhouses or multi family houses. (This

is not unlike the bed-and-breakfast scale inn which could be in the village center.)

There is one area in the southwestern portion of the village center, bounded by Cedar Street and the Hope Blairstown Road where it would be possible to build twelve or thirteen houses. This would complete the Village Center, create a new neighborhood area that would feel like an extension and completion of the existing center. Landscaping standards could be used to link and extend green natural systems that weave through the village center.

New residential development in the Village Centers is likely to have a net negative fiscal impact but this may be mitigated by the fact that attached dwellings, without individual yards, in the center may attract fewer families with children. It may be worth intensifying the village center because it is so supportive of the Township providing customers for village center businesses and completing the streetscape of several blocks and streets.

TDR Potential for Residential Uses

While conventional residential uses are a net drain on township resources from most perspectives, there is one way in which housing can support the larger open space goals of the township. Right now there are thousands of acres of land zoned for residential development, potentially yielding many new single family houses scattered across the Township. It is not realistic to assume that the Township will have the resources to purchase all of this land. Therefore it is worth exploring the possibility of creating a “transfer of development rights” (TDR) program within the Township, using the highway interchange area as a receiving zone. In addition to preserving open space elsewhere in the Township, concentrating housing here would have several other benefits. The housing would be in a location where it could support the life of the Village Center; the housing, if planned according to conservation subdivision principles, could use land more efficiently and create a new neighborhood; traffic impacts could be managed here, as there is better access to major roads and less driving on the rest of the township streets.

Design Studies

To better understand the actual physical design consequences of different development scenarios and to begin to outline design guidelines for the development areas, several representative development programs were studied – both in plan and physical models. Only representative studies were done – not every permutation of every program at each of three sites was necessary to understand/illustrate the design and planning issues.

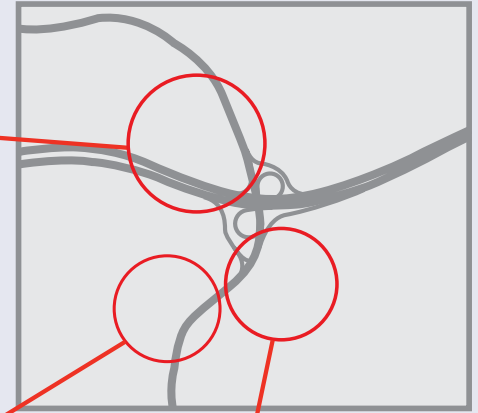
For example, as different as they are from an economic development perspective, the light industrial and the professional office site planning strategies both create a “campus” of buildings, each roughly 30,000 sf. in size. And while parking and loading requirements are quite different, these two development programs present similar strategies for building placement, access, views and landscaping.

Industrial & Office

Northwest Quadrant

- Locate buildings on the north side of the development area. (This is where the development will tend to go because the topography is relatively flat.) Buildings should be located on the lower elevations where the buildings will be less visible and to leave a large, contiguous area of undisturbed landscape.
- Site buildings in a way that is sympathetic to the landscape and topography. Develop a landscape strategy that extends the surrounding landscape into, and through, the "campus".
- Primary access should be from a new intersection that aligns with the Hope Marksboro Road.
- Screen the development from roadway views except at the entry area.

Plan Simulation

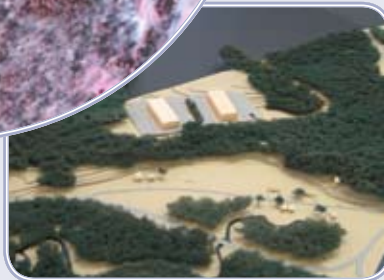


Plan Simulation



Southwest Quadrant

- Locate buildings on the level topography at the eastern portion of the site to minimize disruption to the large expanse of forest further south and west. Set the buildings back from the eastern edge of the redevelopment area by 200 feet in order to screen the buildings from the west-bound Route 80 viewshed.
- Site the buildings to allow the landscape to run into and through the campus. The east-west orientation of the buildings can respond to solar access.
- Primary access is from a new road connecting to County Route 521. This road will be visible from Route 80, and so must be properly landscaped and screened.



Model Photo

Southeast Quadrant

- Locate buildings on the western portion of the redevelopment area where the existing trees will screen views from east-bound Route 80.
- Primary access should be from Route County Route 521.
- Extend the landscape of the redevelopment area, in particular the trees along the Mill Brook and the stands of trees between the fields into the courtyards between the buildings. The east-west orientation of the buildings can respond to solar access.

Plan Simulation



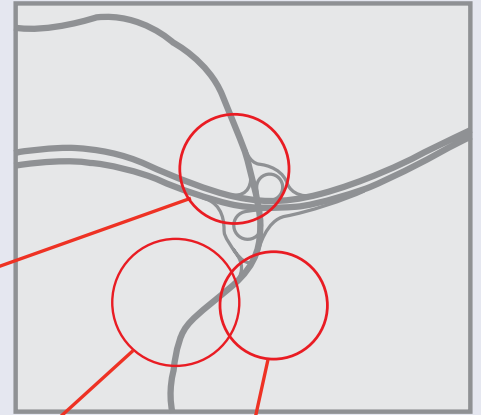
Model Photo

Chain Hotel

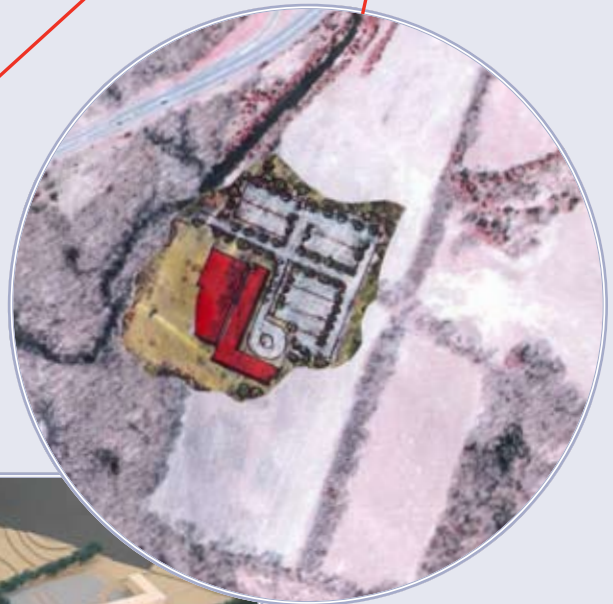
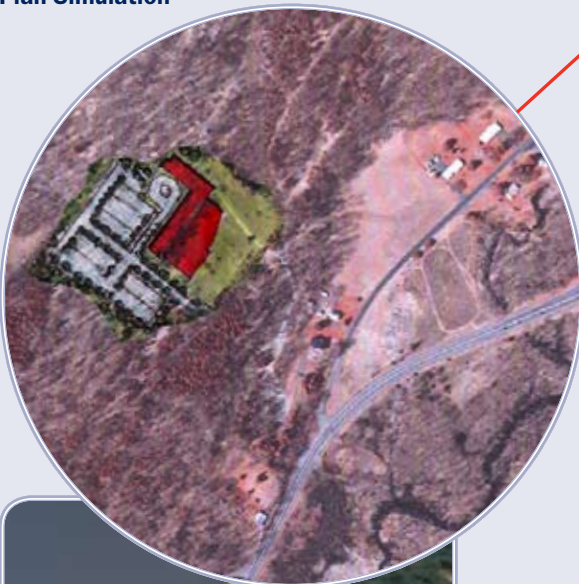
North, Along Route 521

Of all the development types, this may be the one that, if properly designed, because of its relatively small land area compared to the other development types could be located in the low-lying areas along Route 521 just north of Route 80. This is where a variety of smaller commercial businesses have already located and so compromising a beautiful natural setting is not an issue. It has the advantage of being readily accessible from Route 80, and visible from the highway as well (although not as one approaches the exit ramps where the spontaneous "drive-by" decision to get there could be made). However, this also means that the building would have to be attractive, something that could be accomplished with design guidelines.

Plan Simulation



Plan Simulation



Plan Simulation



Model Photo

Southwest Quadrant

If located in the southwest development area it should be set back from the eastern boundary by at least 200 feet to minimize visual impact.

Southeast Quadrant

Similarly, if located in the southeast area, it should be in the lower elevation areas along the western edge. The structure and the parking lots can fit within the subdivision created by the stands of trees.



Model Photo

Outlet Mall

This study has examined the implications of locating the same development type on each of three redevelopment areas (NW, SW, SE). In the case of the outlet center, design studies are presented only for the south east redevelopment area. This is because this site offers the most direct car access from Route 80 and because an outlet center in this location, properly designed, can have connections of several kinds to the Village Center, reinforcing local businesses (see discussion above). Two standard configurations for an outlet mall are presented for the southeast quadrant. These differ in the way parking is configured.

Southeast Quadrant Alternative #1

In the first study, the buildings are organized around a centralized parking area. The buildings should be located on the lower elevations in the western portion of the development zone to facilitate access from Route 521 and minimize visual impact from the east bound Route 80 view shed. Also, in both alternatives, the overall organization of the site responds to the divisions created by the rows of trees separating the fields, minimizing the visual impact of the buildings by placing many of them at the western edge of the site where they are at the lowest elevations and screened by the trees along the Mill Brook. The rest of the buildings can be screened by the rows of trees between the fields.

In this configuration every effort must be made to “tame” what will otherwise be a large expanse of parking, by dividing the parking with landscaped areas and pedestrian ways.

The principal disadvantage of this configuration is that it does not create a well-defined pedestrian-oriented center and so pedestrian connections to the village center will be harder to support – ultimately it is more of an automobile environment.

Model Photo



Plan Simulation Alternative 1



Southeast Quadrant Alternative #2

The other configuration is one in which the parking surrounds the ensemble of outlet store buildings. This has the disadvantage of putting more buildings into the center of the site where they will be more visible from the highway.

However, this configuration has the distinct advantage of creating a well defined pedestrian environment – a “place” with identity, and which can then be connected to the Village Center. The existing stands of trees, which organize the plan, can be linked to a larger landscape design that extends into the public spaces. The parking can be subdivided into reasonably sized lots around the perimeter. These should be well landscaped and pedestrianized.



Plan Simulation Alternative 2



Model Photo

Housing

Northwest Quadrant

Housing at this site as with the other development programs, should be at the north side of the site where it has the least visual impact from the interchange.

While most of the housing should be concentrated in the area of the Hope-Marksboro Road Intersection, it will necessarily extend beyond that immediate area. The housing should not extend to the higher elevations at the center of the site, but wrap itself around the edges of the site in a way that is sympathetic with the landscape. In the design study shown here, the housing is shown extending towards the southeast where it is in the view shed of the intersection. However, in the interest of demonstrating a strategy, the amount of development is diminished as it wraps around to the southeast to minimize its visual impact.

Per the description above, the total yield for housing on this site using the 1 du (dwelling units)/acre standard, is about 40 units. If there is some attached housing, this could be 77 units, representing in part the density transferred off of the north east development zone which for this study we are assuming is not buildable because of environmental constraints.

These units, through application of conser-

vation subdivision principles, are then organized at a gross density of approximately 1 du/ ¼ acre.

- If creative landscaping strategies are used, the residential development will be largely screened from view. However, in the spirit of creating a new neighborhood in Hope as opposed to a gated community, the portion of the housing close to the Hope Marksboro Road intersection should be visible and open. A new public space should be at this location and accessible to the public.

- Any new community facility, which is potentially part of the public presentation of this neighborhood, should be near the entrance area at the Hope Marksboro Road intersection.

Southwest Quadrant

Housing in this area should be on the level topography at the eastern portion of the site. Per the discussions above, the housing should be set back so that it is mostly out of the west-bound Route 80 viewshed.

Applying the same strategies, (1 du/ acre yield) the design studies show approximately 133 houses. (Again, this could be 170 houses if some of the density is transferred off of the environmentally sensitive northeast quadrant).

Access: In the spirit of not creating not a gated subdivision, any community facilities should be located close to the entry points so that there is the potential for shared use by other Township residents.

The design study here illustrates, suggests, several strategies that can inform residential development here. This new neighborhood is organized around the extension and intersection of two green corridors into the site. An east-west corridor begins at the eastern edge of the site, where an access road from Route 521 turns into the neighborhood. This extends westward and opens out onto the large, undisturbed expanse of forest further west, some of which can be made accessible with new pedestrian trails. This

also minimizes the visual impact from the west-bound Route 80 viewshed.

A north-south corridor begins at the southeastern edge of the development zone and corresponds to a potential secondary access road linking to Foundry Road. This green zone then extends northward and opens out onto the forested areas between this new neighborhood and Route 80. A trail network can extend to an overlook on the "little mountain" at the northeast corner of the development area.

Plan Simulation



Model Photo



Plan Simulation



Model Photo





Southeast Quadrant

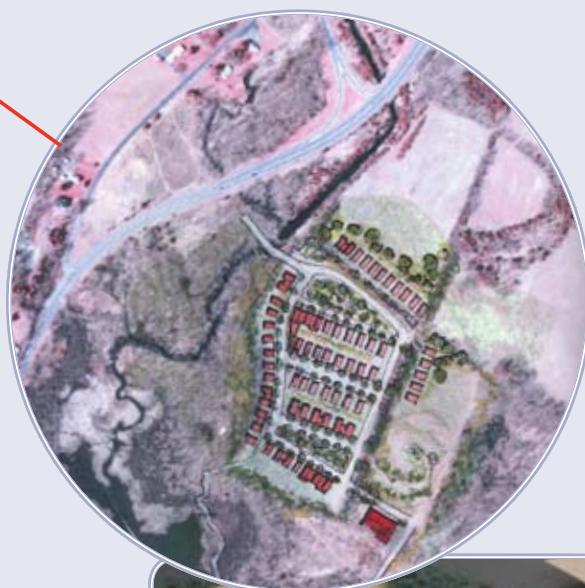
Because this redevelopment area quadrant affords the best connections to the village center, residential development here has the greatest potential to create a new neighborhood that is integrated into the rest of the Village.

As with other forms of development here, the new housing should be on the western portion of the development zone to minimize its visual impact on the east-bound Route 80 viewshed. It should also be located on the southern edge in order to minimize the distance to the village center.

While primary access is from Route 521, secondary access to the Village Center should be considered, either by way of a small connecting road to the Hope Johnsonburg Road or a small road that would wind along the edge of the riparian area to the Village Center. Pedestrian and bike trail connections should also be made.

Any ancillary community facilities should also be located at the south side of the development zone to facilitate access to the rest of the Hope community.

Plan Simulation



Model Photo



Chapter Three:

Fiscal Impacts Study

Introduction

The following chapter presents the assumptions, methodology and results of a fiscal impact analysis of various development scenarios on the public finances of Hope Township and the local school district. The intent of this analysis has been to guide decision-making as it relates to balancing growth and open space preservation, as well as the types of growth that should be permitted through local land use policy. Fiscal analysis is but one such tool, and fiscal considerations should not trump all other criteria for sound land use planning. When viewed in context, however, fiscal impact analysis can help illuminate the trade-offs between different land use policies and development alternatives.

Methodology

The analysis presented here analyzes not a specific project, but a series of potential development scenarios. For simplicity, an average costing approach is employed. For residential development, the method is referred to as the Per Capita Multiplier methodology. It assumes that present municipal services costs are a good proxy for future costs; and that new residents, on average, will demand municipal services at the same rate and existing residents. For commercial development, the Proportional Valuation method was used. This methodology takes assessed valuation as a proxy for development intensity, hence demand for municipal services. Because of inherent limitations in this assumption, various refinement coefficients have been estimated using ex-post-facto analyses of prior impact studies to account for scenarios where the size of the new investment is differs substantially from existing commercial assessments.

Revenue impacts are determined by estimated assessed values and local tax rates. Municipal and school costs are determined by existing municipal and school expenditures, and the estimated population (total and school-age) generated by new development (in the case of residential); and the anticipated assessed valuation (in the case of non-residential). As the tax rate and budget data are independent of the project, the analysis is clearly sensitive to the estimated project value, and the projected population. Anticipated valuations are based upon a number of sources, and often more than one: capitalized estimated net income; comparable sales; construction costs; and the assessed valuations for similar uses in nearby towns. Demographic impacts have been estimated by multipliers published in the Development Impact Assessment Handbook (ULI, 1994).

Development Scenarios

Several residential and commercial development prototypes have been analyzed for their likely fiscal impacts. These prototypes represent, in most cases, uses which have either been proposed for Hope at one time or another, or that have a reasonable likelihood of being developed in Hope based upon market factors and local site suitability.

On the residential side, single family development on one-quarter, one and three acre lots have been considered. Townhouse development, on small in-fill sites in the downtown, represent a fourth scenario. In each case, both conventional and age-restricted development was considered.

A variety of commercial uses have been analyzed. Hope's location along Interstate 80 suggests that it might be a good location for overnight lodging. Uses considered included a 10-room Bed and Breakfast, a 30-room country inn, and a 100-room chain hotel. Hope could also accommodate a small amount of professional office space for medical practitioners, attorneys, insurance agents, etc. A 20,000 square foot, one-story office building on 3 acres was taken as prototypical.

Hope is part of a largely rural region which lacks the population density to support a significant amount of retail. However, outlet centers have often successfully located in such regions, as they are able to draw from a large (100+ mile) trade area. Outlet center development in Hope is unlikely for a number of reasons; however, a 250,000 square foot outlet center was analyzed as an example of a large scale commercial use.

Finally, Hope has seen one or more proposals for a modest amount of build-to-suit, one-story industrial development. Two industrial scenarios have been analyzed: a single 40,000 square foot flex building on 5 acres; and four 30,000 square foot flex buildings on 8 acres.

The analysis is intended to be modular. For example, future development might include both residential and commercial components. Impacts for each use can be summed to estimate the total impact. For convenience, the impacts of residential use have been analyzed in increments of 10 units, allowing the result to be applied to developments of various sizes (the results scale linearly).

Background Data

Sources of Revenue

As shown in Table 1, Hope has a totally assessed property valuation of about 139 million. Of this, 75 percent is comprised of residential uses—or about 90 percent when farm houses (property class 3a) are included. This is typical for a rural community such as Hope. Only six percent of the existing tax base is comprised of commercial and industrial uses.

Table 1: Hope Township Real Property Tax Base

Source: Township of Hope Tax Assessor, 2005

This would appear to indicate that Hope is heavily dependent upon residential tax payers to fund its municipal operations. In fact,

however, the Township receives the lion's share of its operating revenue from other sources. Recurring municipal expenditures total approximately \$780,000 per year. Of this, less than \$300,000 comes from local property taxes. About \$308,000 comes from State property tax relief; and another \$170,000 comes from fees, such as court fees.

Code	Parcels		Assessed Valuation	
	Number	Percent	Total	Percent
1. Vacant Land	154	13.5%	\$4,923,400	3.5%
2. Residential	635	55.6%	\$103,246,200	74.4%
3a. Farm (regular)	108	9.5%	\$20,209,800	14.6%
3b. Farm (qualified)	214	18.7%	\$1,842,200	1.3%
4a. Commercial	29	2.5%	\$7,994,900	5.8%
4b. Industrial	1	0.1%	\$209,300	0.2%
4c. Apartments	1	0.1%	\$264,200	0.2%
Total tax base	1,142	100.0%	\$138,690,000	100.0%

The tax rates applied to real property in Hope are shown in Table 2. The largest share of the local property tax levy is for the schools, followed by the County. Hope Township accounts for a small portion of local property taxes.

Local School district	1.839
County	0.767
County Library	0.072
County Open Space	0.083
Local municipal purpose	0.209
Total municipal + school	2.048

Source: Township of Hope Tax Assessor, 2005

Table 2: Hope Township Local Property Tax Rates

Estimated Market and Assessed Valuations

In order to estimate revenues from development, both market and assessed values have been estimated for the uses proposed in the development scenarios. The

ratio between market and assessed value is known as an equalization ratio. For most uses, market values are estimated first, then the equalization ratio applied to determine taxable assessed value. However, for certain uses, assessed value has been estimated directly from the assessed values of comparable uses in other nearby municipalities. For these, the equalization ratio is not applied. The estimated values for each use are described below:

Single Family Houses: Based on a review of comparable sales, residential land in the region averages about \$70,000 per acre; and a new home on the land adds \$350,000. For single-family homes on one-quarter, one and three acre lots, the prices become \$370,000, \$420,000 and \$560,000, respectively.

Townhouses: A value of \$250,000 per unit is assumed for townhouses, based on experience. There are few townhouse developments in the immediate area to serve as comparables.

Lodging: For hospitality uses, assessed rather than market values have been estimated:

Bed and Breakfasts: Assessed similarly to single family homes, as the income from a B&B are typically sufficient only to maintain the owners. Based on a review of B&B assessments, land is assessed at \$45,000 per acre, and each room adds \$25,000. Therefore, a 10-room B&B on 5 acres has an estimated assessed value of about \$475,000.

Inns: A similar study of assessed values for Inns produced the same assessment for land, but a \$45,000 per room value for the improvements. A 30 room inn on 10 acres would therefore be assessed at \$1.8 million.

Chain hotels: There are several hotels located off of I-80 east of Hope. Based on a review of their assessments, land zoned for hotel development is worth \$70,000 per acre, and each room is worth \$40,000. (It should be noted at these are averages, and individual assessments varied wildly.) A chain hotel on 10 acres with 100 rooms would therefore be assessed at \$6 million.

Office and industrial uses: Market values have been estimated based on land and construction costs. Construction costs come from RS Means, while land values have been estimated from comparables.

For offices, land was assumed to have a value of \$50,000 per acre, while the improvement would cost \$100 per square foot. Industrial values work out to about half of this, based on their lower per-square foot revenue producing potential. Using these figures, a 20,000 square foot office building on 3 acres would have a value of \$2.3 million; a 40,000 square foot industrial flex building on 5 acres would have a value of \$2.1 million; and three 30,000 square foot industrial buildings on 8 acres would have a value of \$6.2 million. As a reality check, a 40,000 square foot flex building obtain a triple-net rent of \$5 per foot would have a capitalized value of \$2.2 million (at a 9 percent cap rate). The estimate of \$2.1 million is both consistent with estimated income and conservative.

Outlet center: No good comparables from the region are available. A value of \$120 per square foot of retail space, corresponding to the high end of potential construction costs, was assumed. This leads to a total market value of \$30 million.

These estimated valuations are summarized in Table 3, below.

Use	Estimated value	
	Market	Assessed
Single-family homes		
1/4-acre lots	\$370,000	
1-acre lots	\$420,000	
3-acre lots	\$560,000	
Townhouses	\$250,000	
Office (20,000 SF on 3 acres)	\$2.3 million	
Industrial		
40,000 SF on 5 acres	\$2.1 million	
3 X 30,000 SF on 10 acres	\$6.2 million	
Outlet retail (250,000 square feet)	\$30 million	
Bed & Breakfast (10 rooms on 5 acres)		\$475,000
Small Inn (30 rooms on 10 acres)		\$1.8 million
Chain hotel (100 rooms on 10 acres)		\$6 million

Sources: RS Means, 2005 (construction cost data) TaxRecords.com, 2005 (comparable sales and assessments) PPSA estimates

Table 3: Estimated Market & Assessed Values for Development Scenarios

Fiscal Impact Results

Residential Uses

Revenue Impacts

The revenues generated by residential development are calculated by taking the estimated market value of the units and multiplying by the equalization ratio and applicable tax rate. For the purposes of this analysis, revenues accruing to the municipality and school district are considered. Additional revenue would be paid to the County, but this revenue is not included in the analysis.

Revenues are estimated for residential development occurring in increments of ten units. The results can be extrapolated to a development of any size by dividing the relevant impact by 10 and multiplying by the appropriate number of units. A sample calculation is presented for 10 single-family homes on quarter-acre lots; the results for all residential prototypes are summarized in a table.

Table 4: Sample Residential Revenue Calculation (All numbers rounded)

1	Market value	\$3,700,000
2	X equalization ratio	63.4%
3	= Assessed value	\$2,350,000
4	Municipal tax rate (per \$100)	0.209
5	School district tax rate (per \$100)	1.839
6	Municipal revenues (3 X 4/100)	\$4,900
7	School district revenues (3 X 5/100)	\$43,200

Performing the same calculation for all residential uses leads to the following results:

Table 5: Summary of Residential Revenue Impacts

Use (10 Units)	Municipal revenues	School District Revenues
Single family on 1/4-acre lots	\$4,900	\$43,200
Single family on 1-acre lots	\$5,600	\$49,000
Single family on 3-acre lots	\$7,400	\$65,000
Townhomes	\$3,300	\$29,000

Cost Impacts

In order to estimate cost impacts, the first step is to determine per-capita municipal and per-student school expenditures. Since municipal services are provided to both residential and non-residential land uses, municipal expenditures must be apportioned between the two. The proportion of assessed value between residential and non-residential uses, modified by a refinement coefficient, is typically used as a proxy for this purpose.

Applying this methodology to the Township's total recurring expenditures of \$772,000 in 2004 leads to estimate that \$500,000 of the budget goes to servicing residential development, while \$272,000 goes to servicing non-residential development. Hope's most recent estimated population was 1,961 (source: New Jersey Department of Labor, 2005) – per capita municipal expenditures are therefore approximately \$255 per person.

The most recent school district budget was 3.03 million on an enrollment of 240 students. This works out to approximately \$12,700 in expenditures per student (source: NJ Department of Education Comparative Spending Guide).

The next step is to estimate the population impacts of the proposed new residential units. This is done with demographic multipliers for total population and school-age children for single-family units and townhouses. The multipliers used in this analysis come from the Development Impact Assessment Handbook published by ULI. However, no standard multipliers for age-restricted development are readily available. To be conservative, two people are assumed for each age-restricted unit regardless of type. The resulting demographic projections are shown below:

Table 6: Estimated Residential Demographic Impacts

	<u>Single-family</u>		<u>Townhouse</u>	
	Conventional	Age-restricted	Conventional	Age-restricted
Units	10	10	10	10
Population multiplier	3.3065	2	2.5373	2
School-age children multiplier	0.7119	0	0.2772	0
Population impact	33	20	25	20
School-age child impact	7	0	3	0

Source: Burchell & Listoken, Development Impact Assessment Handbook, ULI, 1994. Phillips Preiss Shapiro Associates, Inc.

Municipal and school costs can now be estimated straightforwardly. The calculations are summarized in Table 7. This table projects that all conventional residential development will impose significant costs on the school district of up to \$8,900 per unit, on average. Municipal costs are modest by comparison.

Table 7: Residential Municipal and School Cost Impacts

	<u>Single-family</u>		<u>Townhouse</u>	
	Conventional	Age-restricted	Conventional	Age-restricted
Units	10	10	10	10
Population	33	20	25	20
School-age children	7	0	3	0
Per-capita municipal expenditures	\$255	\$255	\$255	\$255
Per-student expenditures	\$12,700	\$12,700	\$12,700	\$12,700
Total estimated municipal expenditures	\$8,400	\$5,100	\$6,400	\$5,100
Total estimated school expenditures	\$89,000	\$0	\$38,000	\$0
Total municipal + school expenditures	\$97,400	\$5,100	\$44,400	\$5,100

Reconciliation of Costs and Revenues

Table 8 summarizes the net annual fiscal impacts for different types of residential development.

Table 8: Summary of Residential Costs and Revenues (Negative numbers in parentheses)

Housing type (10 units)	Net annual fiscal impacts		Total
	Municipality	School District	
Conventional			
Single family			
Quarter-acre	(\$3,500)	(\$46,000)	(\$49,500)
One-acre	(\$2,800)	(\$40,000)	(\$42,800)
Three-acre	(\$1,000)	(\$24,000)	(\$25,000)
Townhouse	(\$3,100)	(\$9,000)	(\$12,100)
Age-restricted			
Single family			
Quarter-acre	(\$200)	\$43,000	\$42,800
One-acre	\$500	\$49,000	\$49,500
Three-acre	\$1,800	\$65,000	\$66,800
Townhouse	(\$1,800)	\$29,000	\$27,200

Source: Phillips Preiss Shapiro Associates, Inc. 2005

These numbers show a number of interesting trends. First, the net impacts are negative for all conventional residential developments, and positive for all age-restricted developments. Second, among the conventional prototypes, Townhouses have the lowest impact due to their smaller population and school child multipliers, in spite of their lower assessed values. This indicates that higher-end Townhouses with market values of \$320,000 or more would have net positive fiscal impacts on the Township and school district. However, this is little or no precedent for townhouses at this price point in the Hope region.

Commercial Uses

The impact estimation procedure is the same for all commercial uses, regardless of type. Both revenues and expenditures are estimated on the bases of anticipated project value, although expenditures are subject to a refinement coefficient which accounts for bias when the new development is large in value in comparison with the existing non-residential tax base (as is the case for the Outlet Center). Because the procedure is the same for each use, this section will detail a summary calculation for one commercial use, and present the final results for all other uses. The commercial office building is used as the example.

Revenue Impacts

As per the prior section, the estimated market value for a 30,000 square foot office building on 3 acres of land is \$2.3 million. Based on local tax rates, such a building would pay a little over \$6,000 a year to the Township, and nearly \$27,000 a year to the local schools.

Table : Sample Revenue Projection for an Office Development

1	Market value	\$2,300,000
2	X equalization ratio	63.4%
3	= Assessed value	\$1,460,000
4	Municipal tax rate (per \$100)	0.209
5	School district tax rate (per \$100)	1.839
6	Municipal revenues (3 X 4/100)	\$6,100
7	School district revenues (3 X 5/100)	\$26,800

Cost Impacts

Estimating cost impacts using the proportional valuation method involves three steps: (1) apportioning the amount of local expenditures which go to service commercial development; and (2) projecting the amount of new costs that will be incurred by the increment of new development. The variables used are the existing total and per parcel average assessed real property value; the existing total and average commercial real property value; and recurring municipal expenditures. As the relationship between these variable is non-linear, both steps 1 and 2 require the application of a refinement coefficient, which comes from a set of estimated curves presented in the New Practitioner's Guide to Fiscal Impact Analysis. A sample calculation of this type is shown below for the proposed office development.

Table 9: Sample Municipal Cost Estimation for an Office Development

1	Municipal expenditures	\$772,773
2	Total equalized real property value	\$138,690,000
3	Total number of land parcels	1,142
4	Total non-residential equalized property value	\$8,204,200
5	Total number of non-residential land parcels	30
6	Average equalized real property value per parcel (2 ÷ 3)	\$121,445
7	Average non-residential equalized real property value per parcel (4 ÷ 5)	\$273,473
8	Real property value of development	\$2,250,000
9	Equalized real property value average non-residential parcel to average local price (7 ÷ 6)	2.3
10	Real property value of development to average non-residential real property value (8 ÷ 7)	8.2
11	Proportion of non-residential value to total local real property value (4 ÷ 2)	0.059
12	Refinement coefficient	1.52
13	Total municipal expenditures attributable to non-residential uses (1 x 11 x 12)	\$69,800
14	Proportion of development to total local non-residential real property value (8 ÷ 4)	0.27
15	Refinement coefficient	0.37
16	Municipal costs allocated to the non-residential development (13 x 14 x 15)	\$7,051

Impact Summaries

The forgoing example shows that for the prospective office development, the local service cost impact is \$7,000 per year. This compares with municipal revenues of \$6,100 per year. The office development would also pay \$26,800 to the local schools. As a result, there is a small estimated deficit at the municipal level, but a large surplus for the school district. From a taxpayer's perspective, the total fiscal surplus is \$25,900 (\$26,800 school surplus minus the \$900 municipal deficit).

The following table summarizes the fiscal impacts across all commercial uses, estimated using the same methodology as presented above. All the uses studies provide a net positive fiscal impact on the municipality and school district combined.

Table 10: Summary of Net Annual Fiscal Impacts for Commercial Uses

Use	Net Municipal Impact	Net Local School Impact	Total Net Impact
Office (20,000 SF on 3 acres)	(\$900)	\$25,800	\$24,900
Industrial			
40,000 SF on 5 acres	(\$4,200)	\$24,600	\$20,400
3 X 30,000 SF on 10 acres	(\$5,300)	\$72,100	\$66,800
Outlet retail (250,000 square feet)	\$16,500	\$350,000	\$366,500
Bed & Breakfast (10 rooms on 5 acres)	(\$2,600)	\$8,700	\$6,100
Small Inn (30 rooms on 10 acres)	(\$3,100)	\$33,100	\$30,000
Chain hotel (100 rooms on 10 acres)	(\$6,100)	\$110,300	\$104,200

Source: Phillips Preiss Shapiro Associates, Inc.

Caveats

Hope is a rural community with a small commercial base. Accordingly, the community has a small overall budget, as it does not have to provide the same services, nor the same level of services, as a more developed community. Modest commercial developments are unlikely to change this picture substantially, but large developments – such as a chain hotel and certainly an outlet center – undoubtedly would. An average costing approach for these types of developments may therefore produce misleading results. For example, an outlet center would clearly require security and fire protection services beyond what Hope can individually, or collectively with other towns, provide. On the other hand, some of these services might be provided for by the developer of such a center, through private on-site security, or contributions which lead to the construction of a new firehouse, as examples.

Conclusions: Implications for Planning

There are two major conclusions that can be drawn from the above analysis.

First, if Hope wishes to maintain its existing taxing and service structure, open space preservation can play a major role. Given local tax rates and market values, new residential construction has the potential to place increasing strains on both the municipality but especially the school system. This is particularly true of single-family development on smaller lots, and less true for large estates or for townhomes. Even still, there is a strong fiscal incentive for growth management. This should not be taken to mean that no residential growth should ever occur in Hope – such an outcome could ossify the town and negatively impact its character – but rather that controlling such growth is in the Township's fiscal interest.

As an example, preserving 3,200 acres of farmland might conservatively forestall the development of 300 units of housing (assuming large lots, environmental constraints, and not all of the land developed). The cumulative negative impacts avoided could total over \$700,000 per year, while the cost of the land or development rights acquisition might be bonded for over 10 years at \$200,000 per year.

Secondly, allowing some new development to take advantage of the Township's highway interchange can produce a significant share of the revenue necessary to undertake an open space preservation program. A low-impact interchange scenario of offices or could generative \$25,000 to 75,000 per year; while high-impact development could generate \$100,000 to \$350,000 per year. Either way, these payments could help support bonding for open space or development rights acquisition.

Re-examine existing regulations

Chapter Four:

Next Steps

As part of the current master plan process the uses permitted in the interchange should be reexamined to see the extent to which they support, or not, the range of uses studied here. Housing is currently excluded. The Township may want to reconsider this for age restricted housing which the fiscal impact study shows is a significant net ratable development. Conventional housing should be held in abeyance until the TDR study is completed.

Develop Design Guidelines for Future Development

This study has outlined, described the broad dimensions of design guidelines for future development by suggesting roughly where buildings should be sited, and how they should be massed; how they should be oriented; primary and secondary access; connectivity strategies; or the next step would be to do more specific guidelines that would include dimensioned diagrams to building height and setback, coverage; landscape treatment, etc.

Complete Site Specific Environmental Assessment

For this study, a kind of “fatal flaw” level of assessment was applied to the development parcels in regards to the habitat, watershed and forestry constraints shown in the Environmental Constraints map on the bottom of page 12.

That analysis showed that conservation subdivision and best management practices would enable these parcels to be developed wisely. Before proceeding, a more detailed

analysis of these constraints should be done. In fact, at the public forum, one resident raised these concerns specifically.

Explore a Township-Wide TDR Strategy

New conventional residential development at the interchange, although it is probably a net drain on the Township’s fiscal situation, could make sense if it was linked to the Township’s goals for open space preservation. This could be accomplished by, in part, by transferring units from elsewhere in the Township to the interchange even. This has the benefit of placing housing that would otherwise be scattered throughout the Township, creating discontinuities in the landscape, in a location where 1) traffic impacts can be mitigated and 2) at densities that will create true neighborhoods and 3) proximate to the existing village center reinforcing the business there.

Further study is needed to understand the feasibility of a TDR scheme here. The recent interest by the DCA and Office of State Planning in TDR should be used to support this effort.

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Regional Plan Association (RPA) is an independent regional planning organization that improves the quality of life and the economic competitiveness of the 31-county, New York-New Jersey-Connecticut region through research, planning, and advocacy. Since 1922, RPA has been shaping transportation systems, protecting open spaces, and promoting better community design for the region's continued growth. We anticipate the challenges the region will face in the years to come, and we mobilize the region's civic, business, and government sectors to take action.

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